



October 13, 2021
220 S. Main St. Bel Air, MD 21014
1st Floor Conference Room
8:00 -- 9:30 a.m.

Summary Notes

Director's Report

Len Parrish, Director OCED

Mr. Parrish welcomed attendees of the meeting and introduced Billy Boniface, Chief Advisor who welcomed the group and reported on the current administrative activities including extending outdoor dining (with waivers) into next year, possibly longer. They are excited about celebrating with local businesses for Business Appreciation week.

OCED provided multiple updates. Harford Awards is next Wednesday. We have legislation before council for MEDAF funds. COVID has shown our workforce is resilient compared to much of the country: we're still pulling from 13 jurisdictions and still maintaining a low unemployment rate, but we do need workers. Office space availability is up, maybe due to telework, but we anticipate will go down as things get back to "normal." We're partnering with EAGB and Commerce on ventures moving forward. Transit won Transportation System of the Year for the fourth time. Transit has added a stop for Medifast after Medifast presented data showing it would help a significant portion of workforce: this is the way collab is supposed to work. Also, Harford County is celebrating 250 years! 2022 and 2023 are going to be busy.

Grant-in Aid, CDBG/HOME Grant funding opening soon until December. Workforce Technical Training Grant is due October 22 BY 5 p.m. and the COVID Telework Grant is due October 29 BY 5 p.m. We received 2 apps for Enterprise Zones. The Grove is hosting several events with information available on Facebook and the Harford County website.

The municipalities offered updates. Bel Air and Aberdeen both offered thanks for the grants that have been given out during COVID. It has immensely helped the business community. Despite restraints, they have helped hundreds of businesses. Winter Wonderland and the Christmas Parade are being planned for December. Bel Air is also holding a meeting at the Armory for the 10-year Comp Plan if anyone would like to attend.

Karen Holt, Deputy Director, offered a defense update. Aberdeen Proving Ground remains at HPCON "Bravo" with 40% workforce capacity on-site at installation; mask wearing continues to be required indoors and outdoors on installation if conducting business in an official capacity. We've maintained a stable 160 defense contractors over COVID. Telework is becoming big with the defense community: we'll see how that evolves (the future of work and what that looks like is in discussion now.) The new CECOM Commander is MG Robert Edmondson. The new APG Garrison Commander is COL Johnny Casiano. Both commanders are VERY community-focused, which is good news for HarCo. The Spirit of Thanks Tour this year stayed local in Harford County: will likely continue this way in the future as it was more successful.

Dr. Sean Bulson, Superintendent of Harford County Public Schools, offered remarks. THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IS DOING THEIR BEST, PLEASE BE CIVIL. HCPS has lost six school nurses in the past month. There are lots of workforce issues: people are burned out (a lot of it is people being mean. P-TECH is a GREAT success at Joppatowne: it's a partnership with HCC and APG where high school students can graduate with the diploma, an Associate's degree, AND a security

clearance. Also, there will be a Business Roundtable on November 9 that Dr. Bulson will be speaking.

Bruce England from Susquehanna Workforce Network shared that they are helping employers and employees alike. They will hold multiple job fairs and the next one is virtual on October 19. There are 5,000 job openings in Harford County.

Upper Chesapeake Health offered an update. The Aberdeen campus will start seeing oncology patients in two weeks. The main campus in Bel Air is adding a three-floor tower, and 72-75 beds. There are shortages at every level of staffing, especially nurses and the ER is running at full-capacity, mostly COVID patients. PLEASE GET VACCINATED – our healthcare workers are burned out. They have begun a transition plan for Harford Memorial. Lyle Sheldon, CEO, is retiring and they are entering a national search for his replacement, with an anticipated start date as of January 1, 2022. HCC and UCH are partnering for workforce training (74% of UCH nurses are from HCC) HCC and UCH may try a pilot program for RN to BSN.

Harford Community College offered updates. There are new Workforce development and training with three classes that have kicked off. HCC is looking for students and employers for classes. They're looking for employers to form a consortium/cohort to address gaps and up-skill needs. HCC is starting a CDL training program that feeds directly into transit (mutually beneficial) and are interested in programs with direct funnels for associates degrees for arts and sciences WHILE the student is working full-time.

Mary Hastler of HCPL said that HCPL will be celebrating 75 + 1 year. They are involved with the Farm & Bay to Table Cooking Show with John Shields which is a success. The HCPL Gala has been postponed to April 9. November 6 they will hold a Poker Run & Pub Crawl instead.

EDAB Meeting (Location may be virtual)

1.12.22	8:00 a.m., TBD
4.13.22	8:00 a.m., TBD